AN
ESSAY
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SUCH PUBLIC REMEDIES
As are usually Distinguished by the name
QUACK MEDICINES

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AN
ESSAY
IN FAVOUR OF
SUCH PUBLIC REMEDIES,
As are uſually diſtinguiſhed by the Name of
QUACK MEDICINES;
WHEREIN
THE OBJECTIONS HITHERTO MADE AGAINST THEM ARE FULLY ANSWERED,
AND
THEIR VIRTUES SET FORTH IN A PROPER LIGHT.

By a COUNTRY GENTLEMAN,
Formerly a PRACTITIONER in the SCIENCE of PHYSIC.

The world grows wiſe, and wiſer every day:
Witneſs how plain to phyſic is the way.
This art, which once requir'd ſuch mighty pains,
Such ſtudy, and ſuch racking of the brains,
So eaſy now is made, that we cure more
In half a year, than once in half a ſcore!

LONDON:
Printed for S. CROWDER, in Pater-noſter Row; and Sold by FLETCHER and HODSON, at Cambridge; PRINCE, at Oxford; HODSON and JOHNSON, at Saliſbury; CRUTWELL, at Bath; GOADBY, at Sherborne; WILKES, at Wincheſter; ETHERINGTON, at York; SLACK, at Newcaſtle; WRIGHT, at LEEDS; and all other Bookſellers.

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WHEN the writer of the following little eſſay firſt reſolved to publiſh it, he was well aſſured that there would be many circumſtances greatly to his diſadvantage. To root out a prejudice from the minds of the public, is at any rate a difficult undertaking; but when this prejudice is ſtrengthened by the opinion and practice of conſpicuous men, it becomes conſiderably more hazardous, to attempt a confutation of it; and it was no difficult matter to foreſee, that a treatiſe on this ſubject would at once bring down the phyſical Gentlemen on the author, who thus daringly preſumed to infringe upon their practice, and to deſtroy the tenets which they for years had been labouring to eſtabliſh.

Theſe difficulties, however, formidable as they might at firſt appear, were not ſufficient to deter him from his purpoſe. He knew

that

that none but intereſted perſons could be his opponents, and as he enters the liſts with reaſon on his ſide, he is regardleſs of their utmoſt attempts againſt him.

He has ever entertained the moſt profound veneration for that reſpectable ſociety of men (when conſidered as a ſociety) whoſe profeſſion it is to heal our bodily infirmities.—Their merit he beholds without envy, and acknowledges it with the greateſt freedom. Yet there are *ſome* amongſt them, who, inſtead of being an *ornament* to their profeſſion, are of no other ſervice than to bring diſgrace and infamy upon it; who are equal ſtrangers to candour and generoſity, and who, from a conſciouſneſs of their own inability in the ſcience wherein they have undertaken to practiſe, are every day taking the moſt illiberal methods to promote their own buſineſs, by depreciating the articles prepared by their fellow labourers.

The ſame, indeed, may be ſaid of men in almoſt every claſs of life, and there are

few

few bodies which do not contain ſome unworthy members; but thoſe here ſpoken of, have had it more immediately in their power to ſpread a dangerous principle, as amongſt perſons in the *country* a *doctor*'s word is too often received as the voice of an oracle, and an ignorant profeſſor of the art of phyſic is not *there* diſtinguiſhed from the man of knowledge and abilities.

From theſe men, a violent oppoſition may reaſonably be expected; but from the gentleman, and the man of ſenſe and impartiality, the author hopes for a different treatment. *They* have no private intereſt to bias their opinion, and he truſts they will candidly examine into the truth of his aſſertions, before they give their voice againſt him. He aſſures them, that he is no way intereſted in the cauſe he has undertaken, more than as a man who would wiſh his brother's life to be preſerved. He has ſeen with concern the *private* noſtrums which have been adminiſtered, while public remedies, — far more likely to complete the cure,—have been

rejected

rejected and deſpiſed; and cannot, therefore, but undertake a public explanation and defence of theſe articles, which, though at preſent labouring under the ſevereſt reproaches, are yet capable of releaſing us from the bonds of infirmity, and of preſerving the lives of our unhappy fellow-creatures, who have been long a prey to ſickneſs and diſeaſe.

As theſe are his only reaſons for offering this pamphlet to the world, he chearfully ſubmits his arguments to their examination, and will patiently acquieſce in their deciſion.

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ESSAY

IN FAVOUR OF

PUBLIC MEDICINES.

NEVER, perhaps, was there any age, wherein the preparers and venders of medicines were so numerous as at present:—the press now daily teems with their productions; the news-papers are crowded with their lists of cures; and we are perpetually hearing of some thankful person, who is sending forth his gratitude in print, for having been restored to health from a dangerous disease, and miraculously rescued from the jaws of death, by tinctures, powders, pills, or drops, prepared by these advertisers. Their essays, treatises, and dissertations, on the various disorders incident to the human frame, have been purchased with

avidity, and read with attention; they have impreſſed, on the minds of the readers, a favourable opinion of the compoſitions they recommend; and, by explaining the peculiar eaſe with which they may be taken, and the very great probability of their performing an effectual cure, they have eſtabliſhed an extenſive ſale for their articles, and are at this time held by many in the higheſt eſteem, as the univerſal diſpenſers of health and long life. There is, at the ſame time, a number of perſons, with whom a prejudice againſt theſe Medicines has taken root, and who exclaim againſt the inventors of them in the moſt vehement manner, and vilify both them and their medicines with names the moſt opprobrious and undeſerved.

To remove this prejudice, and to point out the advantages attending the preſent method of preſcribing remedies for our diſeaſes, is a duty incumbent on every man who has it in his power, as a continuance of the various opinions now ſubſiſting, muſt at any rate be detrimental to the community.—If they do *not* poſſeſs the virtues attributed to them, but are injurious to the health and ſafety of the patient, let the venders of them, in point of juſtice, be prohibited from

diſpenſing

diſpenſing them; but if they are really found to be of ſervice, even in the moſt deſperate caſes; —if they have removed complaints, where the ſkill of phyſicians has in vain been exerciſed:—If theſe, I ſay, are the happy conſequences of their being adminiſtered, in what light muſt we conſider thoſe men, who, inſtead of furthering and aſſiſting in the diſtribution of them, are employing every poſſible means to ſtop their ſale? As members of ſociety, and as well-wiſhers to our fellow-creatures, it is our duty to encourage all diſcoveries which tend to public utility; and thoſe which are conducive to the preſervation of our lives and conſtitutions, are certainly uſeful in the higheſt degree. I need not here enumerate the diſagreeable effects ariſing from the loſs of health; they are ſufficiently numerous, and ſpeak for themſelves.—From the cradle to the grave we are the ſubjects of diſeaſe, and our lives are a ſeries of miſery and pain.

The oppoſers of public medicines have in general aſſigned two reaſons for ſtigmatizing them with an imputation of quackery and impoſition; — the firſt of which is, that they are vended by perſons who are for the moſt part of *no profeſſion*; and ſecondly, that they are not adminiſtered

ſtered by thoſe of the faculty in regular practice, but are puffed off to the world by pompous advertiſements, ſetting forth virtues never yet diſcovered, and relating cures which never were performed.

To theſe objections an anſwer is eaſily given; but before I engage in this matter, it is neceſſary I ſhould requeſt the calm and patient attention of every perſon, whoſe curioſity may lead him to read this little pamphlet, more particularly of thoſe of the faculty who may do me the honour of a peruſal. I write not with a view to prejudice either *them* or their *profeſſion* in the opinion of the public, but to give men an opportunity of informing themſelves how far the uſe of adverti ſed medicines *is* or is *not* detrimental to their health and conſtitutions. —— A ſubject wherein our lives are ſo materially concerned, is too ſerious and important to be treated on with levity, or with a deſign of furthering the private intereſt of any claſs of people; and there can be no excuſe for him, who, to anſwer this ſelfiſh purpoſe, would endeavour to eſtabliſh erroneous principles amongſt the multitude, and perſuade them to the application of medicines, which deſtroy inſtead of curing them.——From my very youth

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till now I have been converſant with phyſic;—I have minutely obſerved the effects of *different* medicines in the *ſame* diſorders, and of the *ſame* preparations applied to *different* complaints, and after an experience of many years, I can with the ſtricteſt truth aver, that I have ſeldom had reaſon to repent the uſe of ſuch articles as have been recommended to my notice by means of the public papers.—Some of them I have analyſed, in order to diſcover the ingredients they were compoſed of; and where I have done this, I have in many inſtances found them prepared from the moſt ſalutary drugs which the Materia Medica affords, and which are ſpoken of by our moſt learned phyſical writers, as extremely proper in thoſe diſeaſes for which their venders recommend them; and I do at this day declare, that many apothecaries and chymiſts have been ſo well aſſured of their efficacy, that they have either prepared medicines in imitation of them, or have introduced the articles of which they are compoſed into their own private practice, and have adminiſtered them with ſucceſs in many diſorders, wherein they did not before know they were of any ſervice;—a circumſtance, which though it is a convincing proof of their attention to the recovery of their patients, yet it alſo carries with

it an evident demonſtration of the utility of theſe public medicines.

But to proceed: — The firſt objection againſt the practice of vending phyſic by advertiſements, (upon which the ſecond objection ſeems to be wholly founded) moſtly ariſes from the following courſe of reaſoning: — " that in order to be qualified for adminiſtering remedies for our diſeaſes, it is neceſſary to have a perfect knowledge of the ſtructure of the human body; that for this purpoſe, all who are deſigned for the practice of phyſic, are obliged to go through a particular branch of education, in the ſchools or univerſities, and that they are afterwards examined by the moſt intelligent in that ſcience, and could not practice with any degree of reputation, till they had paſſed ſuch examination." This, I am authoriſed to ſay, is the ground-work of their oppoſition, as I have on many occaſions been witneſs to it, and have heard men debating, even to a degree of warmth, on the neceſſity of all medicines being diſpenſed by regular practitioners only, and declaiming on the inefficacy of ſuch as are publiſhed by any other means.

That a knowledge of anatomy, and an experience in phyſical matters, is neceſſary for every

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practitioner in phyſic or ſurgery, no man in his ſenſes will attempt to deny; it is the very foundation and ſupport of their buſineſs, and to this they owe the reputation they have acquired.—By their knowledge and abilities the lives of innumerable perſons have been preſerved, where hope itſelf was loſt, and they are every where eſteemed and reſpected as uſeful and valuable members of the community;—but there is yet an extenſive difference between the preſcribing remedies indiſcrimately for *all* diſorders, and the mixing up or adminiſtering a cure for only a ſingle complaint.——The phyſician, the ſurgeon, and the apothecary, are applied to for the cure of *every* diſeaſe;—the preparer of what is called a QUACK MEDICINE preſcribes for *only one*, or, which is much the ſame, for ſeveral proceeding from *one cauſe*. —— Now if a regular education furniſhes the one with a kind of univerſal knowledge, and qualifies him for adminiſtering to every ſick perſon, why may not the other be enabled to cure a *ſingle* diſorder, either by means of his attention to that diſorder only,—by his own pri ate obſervations and experiments, ariſing from an inclination to purſue medical ſtudies,—or, as it ſometimes happens, by the direction of

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mere chance?—There are many valuable remedies now in uſe, which owe their origin to accident alone; others, which are made up and applied by perſons in the country, who are ignorant of the nature of phyſic in general, and who are perhaps indebted for *their* uſe of them, to the receipts of deceaſed relations or friends, whoſe written directions they implicitly follow;—yet there are few of theſe which are not found to anſwer the purpoſes they are deſigned for; and whoever has been acquainted with the manners and cuſtoms of country people for ſome years paſt, muſt remember the many inſtances there are of even *old women* curing deſperate diſorders, which have baffled all the attempts of our moſt eminent phyſicians.—They are yet to be found in ſeveral villages, and though of obſcure birth, and deſtitute of education, the fame of ſome of theſe ruſtics is now deſervedly reſounded through the kingdom, for the many wonderful cures they have performed.—They are reſorted to, when all others have done their utmoſt;—when the deep-read doctors have in vain explored their volumes;—when they have ranſacked every page of phyſical authority, and have wearied themſelves and their patients in ſearch of a remedy.—Yet, when, after all theſe endeavours, the

patient

patient ſtill lies groaning in the agony of bodily pain, and waiting with impatience for the ſtroke of death, how frequently is he reſtored by ſimple applications, which they, in their mighty wiſdom, were wholly unacquainted with!

Theſe are facts beyond the reach of contradiction; they are known to thouſands, who are ready to teſtify their truth.—How abſurd, then, is it for men to argue, that the power of healing is given to none but thoſe who are phyſically educated! And how unreaſonable are they who would wreſt the practice of it from the hands of perſons who are perpetually working ſuch wonders by it!——They muſt certainly be inſenſible to the feelings of humanity, or they could never think of putting a ſtop to ſo beneficial a ſcheme, as that whereby our lives are lengthened, and our infirmities removed.—— We will readily allow them a competent ſhare of ſkill in their profeſſion, but we can by no means admit them to be the *only* curers of diſeaſe, when every day's experience proves the contrary.— The cures done by the faculty are ſuch as muſt excite the wonder and gratitude of all who have been witneſs to them; but did there yet remain one ſingle diſorder which *they* cannot cure, a medi-

cine which is calculated to remove ſuch a complaint, and is *able* to remove it, ſhould, in ſpite of all oppoſition from them or their agents, be protected and encouraged by the public.

Another argument may be offered, in favour of phyſical diſcoveries by perſons in private life; and though it might at once be ſaid that it is not to the *preparer*, but to the effects of the *medicine*, that we ſhould look, before we give our opinion againſt it; as, if it is properly efficacious, it matters not who the inventor was;—I ſay, notwithſtanding this might eaſily be ſaid, on our part, yet we rather chuſe to explain our point by fair and candid reaſoning, than rudely to force our way by bold, unwarrantable aſſertions.

When we read the hiſtory of our native country, we cannot but admire the many and prodigious improvements, which have been made, through ſucceeding centuries, in the different branches of the arts and ſciences. On this we pride ourſelves exceedingly; and when an Engliſhman ſpeaks of his native kingdom, he ſeldom fails to mention the peculiar encouragement which his countrymen give to all ſuch improvements.—

provements. — He obſerves, with an infinite degree of pleaſure, that we have ſocieties founded on this moſt laudable principle, who, by way of ſtimulating men to the publication of their diſcoveries, offer generous and large rewards to thoſe who ſhall excel in the ſeveral claſſes which they preſcribe for them; and that the fear of being diſappointed in their expectations of theſe rewards may not ſo powerfully operate on the diffidence of ſome men's minds, as to prevent them from exerting their abilities in queſt of new diſcoveries, they have wiſely apportioned different premiums to the merits of the candidates, and have thus opened an extenſive field for men of various occupations to employ their powers. They are encouragers of literature, of muſic, painting, and other of the polite arts, nor have they been inattentive to the more uſeful objects of huſbandry and manufactures; poliſhing, by this means, our ruder natures, and exciting in us an ardor for noble and ſublime purſuits.

Amongſt *their* candidates for fame and honour, and even amongſt the *ſucceſsful* part of them,— we often find men of little or no eſtimation in the world, who are to all appearance dull and ignorant, who have reaped little benefit from

education, and are ſcarcely able to expreſs their own ideas. Yet even theſe men have, by the force of their own natural genius only, brought about matters ſeemingly of the greateſt difficulty, and rendered them eaſy, ſimple, and familiar. Nor have they confined their ſtudies to thoſe particular branches of ſcience wherein they were educated; their genius, perhaps, has taken quite a different turn, and has of itſelf ſtruck out new lights of the moſt important nature, though in a ſphere of learning directly oppoſite to that wherein they were brought up; while regular practiſers of the ſame art or ſcience were bewildering themſelves amidſt a thouſand uncertainties and obſcurities, or humbly following in the beaten path which others had, for ages, trod before them.

Theſe men, however, need not the advantages of birth or education, to recommend them to the patronage of the before-mentioned ſocieties. The performances of each candidate are examined, and the prizes diſtributed to each according to their different degrees of merit.—They are applauded and well received amongſt perſons of ſuperior ſtations, as contributers to the intereſt of the public; they are alſo ſpoken of with pleaſure

ſure by men of that profeſſion which they have helped to improve; and theſe their new methods are almoſt immediately adopted.—In ſome caſes, we find them even diſtinguiſhed by marks of royal favour and approbation;—they riſe to honours and preferments; and diſtant kingdoms echo with their fame.

And while every other ſcience is riſing haſtily towards the ſummit of perfection; while monarchs deign to patronize its improvers, and the whole nation derives freſh dignity and importance from the diſcoveries of individuals, is the ſcience of *Phyſic* alone to be neglected? Is the cultivation of our lands, the extent of our navigation, or the momentary entertainment of the eye or ear, an article of more conſequence than the enjoyment of our health, or the preſervation of our conſtitutions from ſickneſs or diſeaſe? In vain do we attempt to render the earth more fertile;—in vain we labour to extend our commerce;—the charms of poetry are wholly uſeleſs;—and even muſic's ſelf has little power to pleaſe, if, with all theſe bleſſings, we ſtill are languiſhing upon the bed of ſickneſs. Even all that gold can put us in poſſeſſion, would be taſteleſs and inſipid, had we not health to enjoy what we poſſeſs;—

poſſeſs;—yet we cannot, in all our ſearches, find a ſingle patron for the encouragement of this ſublimeſt ſtudy. — Our ſeminaries of learning appropriate honorary rewards for literary exhibitions;—ſocieties inſtituted for the promotion of the uſeful arts, have rewarded men for producing a quantity of graſs or vegetables;—but to whom ſhall *he* apply, who has found out a cure for a torturing and dangerous diſeaſe? There is no ſociety to receive *him*, or to recompenſe him for his labour; — no man of eminence to grant *him* his protection; but, on the contrary, he is *oppoſed* by the whole fraternity of Doctors, and every avenue to fame and honour, through *their* means, is effectually ſtopped up.

Leſt we ſhould be ſuſpected of advancing any matter, which we are not able to prove, we have here preſumed to lay a fact before the public, by way of juſtifying our laſt aſſertion.

About ten years ago a gentleman in London whoſe name is Pierce, was ſo happy as to diſcover a ſtyptic medicine, which was of very great utility in curing inward and external bleedings, and in healing blood-veſſels broke within the body. From a number of experiments made

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on animals, it was proved, that this medicine, in caſes of amputation, would of itſelf immediately ſtop the hemorrhage, without the aſſiſtance of either needle, lint, or bandage; and that very little loſs of blood was ſuſtained in theſe operations whenever it was tried, even where the largeſt arteries were divided. After repeated teſtimonies of its effects, Mr. Pierce preſented a petition to his Majeſty, requeſting that the medicine might be tried on the limb of any criminal who was already condemned to death, or that his Majeſty would grant any other public opportunity of demonſtrating its efficacy. At the ſame time another petition was preſented, by a convict under ſentence of death in Newgate, who would gladly have ſubmitted to the amputation, and ſigned alſo by the uncle and three brothers of the criminal, who all teſtified their conſent to this trial of its effects.—His Majeſty referred them to the ſerjeant ſurgeons, whom he commanded to *call* on Mr. Pierce, and to examine into the nature of the matter. This was not complied with. Neither they nor any perſon from them, ever called on him, and he ſeveral times waited on one of them, but could not get the favour of having his medicine tried.

At length, in a report given in to the King, they propoſed that a quantity of theſe medicines ſhould be left with ſome of the ſurgeons of the hoſpitals, where opportunities might more naturally offer of their being made uſe of. A quantity was accordingly left at St. Thomas's; but inſtead of applying it where it was neceſſary, there is reaſon to believe it was analyſed, to diſcover the compoſition. They were not, however, left in conſequence of the ſerjeant ſurgeons applying to Mr. Pierce, (as they ought to have done, agreeable to a *ſecond* order from his Majeſty) but the proprietor left them there on his own accord, and afterwards informed the ſurgeons of Guy's, St. Bartholomew's, and St. George's hoſpitals, that he would let them have any quantity to make trial of, provided he might be preſent when the experiments were made;—but this was not permitted. He afterwards made a ſecond application to the hoſpitals, but was again refuſed, and here the matter ended.

Their reaſon for declining the experiment on the convict was, becauſe there was no preciſe analogy between the arteries of men and brutes, both with reſpect to the violence of their bleedings, and the means neceſſary to ſtop them, and

that

that the experiments before made were insufficient to warrant a trial on the limbs of men. But these gentlemen did not consider, that some danger is undergone in the trial of almost every new discovery; and if there must be any risk in this case, it was evidently better to hazard it with a forfeited life, saved solely on that condition, than with the life of an innocent person, with which no man, nor *authority*, has a right to sport. It cannot, therefore, be said that they acted on fair and candid principles, in shifting it over to the surgeons of the hospitals; and the serjeants alone can account for their deciding so contrary to the judgments of all the impartial part of mankind, nay, and even of the hospital surgeons themselves.

Under these circumstances, what could the author do? — He was averse to the hackneyed method of advertising; and had hoped, by means of his Majesty's assistance and protection, to introduce his medicine to the notice of the public by recommendations which he thought more effectual than those of an advertisement; but all his efforts brought him nothing but disappointments, and he was at last reduced to the disagreeable necessity either of joining in the

common method, or of renouncing the advantages which the public and himſelf might reaſonably expect from ſo beneficial a remedy. — He ſubmitted the matter to the judgment of the public, and the ſale of his medicines ſince that time has well rewarded him for his pains and ingenuity.

The particulars of this affair are more fully related in a Pamphlet publiſhed by Mr. Pierce, from which the foregoing paſſages relating to it are chiefly extracted; and they at once convince us, by what means the progreſs of phyſical improvements has been ſo extremely ſlow: Where power and intereſt combine againſt us, we labour to no purpoſe, and were there not a conveyance open for giving information to the public of theſe uſeful inventions, we ſhould not at this time have any great reaſon to boaſt of the medical advantages we now enjoy.

I have before obſerved, that men in private life are by no means exempt from the power of making valuable diſcoveries, in the paths of ſcience wherein they were not brought up. Another proof will ſtrengthen what I ſaid.

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An Advertiſement has for ſome time paſt appeared in the public papers, recommending a remedy for aſthmatic complaints. The proprietor of that medicine, (who is known to be a man of property and reputation) had been long afflicted with a violent and dangerous aſthma. He had patiently undergone the various courſes of phyſic, which the Faculty had preſcribed for his diſorder, yet ſtill found himſelf as bad, if not worſe than at firſt. Having thus in vain tried every reſource which *they* could adviſe him to, he began to think of endeavouring to find out ſome remedy for himſelf, and after a number of experiments for that purpoſe, at length he very happily ſucceeded; for he diſcovered a medicine, the effluvia of which being drawn in with the breath, totally removed his troubleſome diſorder, and in a ſhort time reſtored him to that ſtate of health which his phyſicians had deſpaired of ever attaining. From a conviction of its good effects upon himſelf, and as evident a proof of the inability of regular practiſers of phyſic, to perform a cure in caſes like his, he was induced to publiſh this ineſtimable medicine, and informed the public of his reaſons for ſo doing.—What could be more natural? He had the fulleſt aſſurances of its being ſerviceable to

mankind, and from a principle of humanity, rather than with a view to his own private benefit, he offered it to the world. It was a duty that he owed to his fellow creatures; and to have concealed it, would have been a very great injuſtice.

Theſe, with many other ſimilar inſtances, are almoſt every day preſented to our view; and every man has the means of proving their truth, or diſcovering the impoſition. The reſidences of the ſeveral proprietors are no way difficult to be found; and whoever ſhould take upon himſelf to condemn any medicine before he has taken the trouble of enquiring how far it deſerves his cenſure, betrays a mind full of hatred and envy, which cannot bear to ſee the proſperity of another without endeavouring to injure him, and deſtroy his reputation.—The inventors of the two medicines, which I have before mentioned, cannot, one would think, be liable to the ſmalleſt cenſure for publickly advertiſing their ſeveral remedies; yet we find them branded amongſt the reſt, with the names of Quack and Impoſtor, their compoſitions loaded with the ſevereſt invectives, and themſelves treated as deceivers of the public, becauſe, forſooth, they were not

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brought up in the profeſſion of a doctor. Is this conſiſtent with the gratitude we owe to them, for making theſe diſcoveries univerſally beneficial? *this* the reward for the time they have employed to prolong the life of a neighbour?—Sorry am I, indeed, to ſay it, but this is now too much the practice, (and amongſt thoſe, too, whom the name of *Gentleman* ſhould diſtinguiſh) to check the progreſs of any riſing genius, which is likely to make improvements in the ſcience of phyſic.

Theſe medicines, as I have obſerved, are cenſured, becauſe they are *adverti ſed*.—Let us, for for a few minutes, examine into the nature of advertiſements, and ſee whence this mighty diſgrace ariſes.

Some 50 or 60 years ago, when turnpike roads were not ſo general, and the conveyance from place to place was far more difficult than at preſent, people were obliged to put up with many very great inconveniencies, and to confine their wants within a narrow compaſs.—They had no encouragement, and, in ſome caſes, ſcarcely a poſſibility to extend their connexions, and contented themſelves, therefore, with ſuch immediate

ate neceſſaries as their little neighbourhood afforded. They had not then any great inclination for reading, nor were the polite arts ſo generally attended to as they now are.—Domeſtic induſtry employed their time, and left them little leiſure for other amuſements. Such was the ſtate of our forefathers, when the inteſtine broils of the kingdom raiſed their attention, and called them from their villages to aſſiſt their King and country.—The youths, who had hitherto aſſiſted their fathers in the cultivation of their lands, now chearfully enliſted under the banner of their Sovereign, and boldly went to fight againſt their enemies, who threatened ſuch depredations on their native kingdom.—Hence the parents became anxious to know the ſtate of theſe their young adventurers;—they caught with eagerneſs the public papers, and read impatiently an account of every battle, while fear foreboded that their ſons had fallen.

It is from this æra, that we may date the univerſality of news-papers in this kingdom. They were at firſt the vehicles of political information only; — diſcloſing the ſecrets of miniſterial councils, and preſaging to the public a future war or peace; but their plan has ſince been materially

terially altered and improved; and they are now become the vehicles of general information. From the number of hands into which they were diſtributed, it was ſoon diſcovered, that theſe were the beſt and moſt convenient channels for making known our own neceſſities, or for offering a ſupply for thoſe of others. Travelling, too, became more eaſy, by degrees, and diſtance no longer a hindrance to their circulation. A man need only be at the expence of a few ſhillings for an advertiſement, and his wants were immediately made known to many thouſands of perſons, in a ſhorter ſpace of time than could be done by any other method. If a horſe was ſtolen, a houſe broke open, or a robbery committed, the printers of news-papers were inſtantly applied to, and ſuch was their ſucceſs in thus publiſhing the villainy, that the offender has often by this means only been apprehended, and brought to the puniſhment his crime entitled him to.—A landlord, who wants to let an empty houſe, or a few acres of his land, has nothing now to do but to *advertiſe*, and he is ſoon provided with a tenant; and the man of enterpriſing genius, who is deterred from following his purſuits by want of money, advertiſes only *good ſecurity*, and he is immediately ſupplied to the extent of his demands.

mands. In ſhort, there is ſcarcely any article in life, of which we ſtand in need, but what an advertiſement will more eaſily procure than any other means we can deviſe.—Men are now thoroughly ſenſible of this advantage, and hence it is that advertiſements are ſo numerous in all our news-papers.—They form a conſiderable part of their contents, and to men of buſineſs are certainly the moſt valuable. Politics are now little more than a farce; the rage of party has in a great meaſure ſubſided; and peace having fixed her ſtandard amongſt us, we are no longer troubled with the long accounts of battles between contending armies. Our news-papers are now devoted to a more agreeable purpoſe. They yield us a more amuſing variety of matter, as they are either employed in the politer ſervices of literature, or in eſtabliſhing more extenſive connexions amongſt mankind.—Perſons of all ages and occupations agree in encouraging their circulation.—The old and feeble *Cit*, whoſe infirmities confine him from the buſy world, is ſtill deſirous of ſeeing how affairs go on, and therefore *reads the news*; while his *huge, unwieldy lady*, whom even prodigy of bulk cannot reſtrain from faſhionable diverſions, tells her maid to bring the *Morning Paper* with the tea, that ſhe may ſee

when

when the Pantheon opens.—The *City Miſs*, on her part, has a world of entertainment in reading the news-paper. She there reads of trips to Scotland with a father's footman, or a genteel hair-dreſſer. She pities, from her ſoul, the many victims to neglected love, who have cloſed their miſerable lives by ſudden means, and rejoices to find that Roſamond's pond is no longer in the way, to tempt them to deſtroy themſelves. The progreſs of Faſhion, too, ſhe traces, in the papers, through its different changes, and knows who appeared moſt brilliant at court or manſion-houſe.—The *Merchant*, by means of the public papers, knows the departure, voyages and arrivals of his veſſels; the fluctuation of the ſtocks is there alſo exactly minuted, together with the ſtate of our foreign concerns.—The *Sportſman* is preſented with an account of Newmarket and other races; the ſales of horſes, and their various pedigrees; and whatever elſe it may be his intereſt to know.—The *Farmer* ſees the ſtate of the harveſt through the kingdom; the average price of corn in every county, and reads of the various improvements made in huſbandry. And the *Tradeſman* has an endleſs variety of information, which at once both pleaſes and inſtructs him.

As theſe, then, are the numerous advantages of news-papers in general, and as they are in a manner neceſſary for the peruſal of perſons in every ſphere of life, why ſhould it be thought a matter of wonder, that men ſhould therein inſert what they would have univerſally known?

The proprietor of a medicine, which he is willing to publiſh, has no reſource but this. The gate of every other path is ſhut againſt him; *he* is therefore the laſt perſon whom we ſhould ſpeak againſt, for following this ſerviceable method.—And when his drops or tinctures are thus adverti ſed, is their virtue leſſened by this means? Does an advertiſement in a public news-paper render the medicine leſs efficacious, or leſs valuable? In the eye of reaſon it ſhould ſeem otherwiſe; but if the aſſertions of our adverſaries may be credited, one ſingle advertiſement ſubverts the whole maſs of ingredients, deſtroys the very nature of the compoſition, and takes away all its power.

This aſſertion, however, is too groſs to paſs for truth, except amongſt perſons of that *eaſy faith*, who are ready to believe all that is told them

them.—We have evident and open contradictions of it every day.—Inſtead of giving a pompous diſplay of undiſcovered virtues, the proprietors of moſt of our public medicines preſent us with the indiſputable teſtimonies of living witneſſes, who, but for the relief they have found from the uſe of them, had certainly fallen a ſacrifice to their diſorder, or, what is perhaps ſtill worſe, remained miſerable objects of diſtreſs, unhappy in themſelves, and troubleſome to their friends.

How numerous are the accounts which are thus produced of perſons being cured by this means! and how ſincere a pleaſure muſt every feeling mind receive from a peruſal of ſuch valuable cures, and from the reflection that we are not deſtitute of remedies for our moſt dangerous diſorders, though given up by the faculty as totally incurable.—'Tis not many years ago, that we had not a ſpecific for ſcorbutic complaints;—they were imagined to be far beyond the power of medicine, and many an unhappy mortal has gone through the whole Materia Medica for this diſorder, without receiving any real benefit. Sea-water has been tried, without effect; the ſeveral hoſpitals have not been more ſucceſsful;—and the patient, after lingering from year to year, be-

comes a ſpectacle too horrid to behold, and gladly receives the finiſhing ſtroke of death. But ſince the publication of phyſic by advertiſements has become more common, we have been happy enough to find out ſeveral remedies for this dreadful complaint.—Cures of the moſt aſtoniſhing nature have been performed by them, nor can even the faculty deny, that the moſt eminent of them have been firſt conſulted, and have given up their patients as incurable. A medicine of this nature is in the preſent times more than doubly valuable, as the intemperance and luxury of the age is haſtening the ravages of the ſcurvy, and rendering our blood the more impure: And though a love of intemperance cannot on any account be defended, yet thoſe who have been weak enough to aſſociate with the ſons of luxury, and thereby deſtroy their own conſtitutions, have the means now offered them of repairing the breach, and,—ſo far as is in the power of phyſic to aſſiſt them,—to reſtore themſelves to perfect health.

There are ſome diſorders, too, nearly allied to the ſcurvy, which have been fatal to many young perſons of both ſexes. Unhappy objects! borne away by a fondneſs for inordinate pleaſure, or ruined, perhaps, by ſome deceitful wretch, they

are

are inſenſibly led on to this diſgraceful practice, and ere they have reached the meridian of their lives, they fall a prey to an infamous diſeaſe. The fear of publiſhing their ſituation frequently prevents them from ſeeking a remedy in time, and the poiſon, in the mean while, ſpreads through all their veins, till at length they are reduced to the diſagreeable neceſſity of ſubmitting to the moſt torturing operations, or of ſinking into the grave amidſt inconceivable agonies.—Here, ſurely, is diſtreſs ſufficient to excite our pity, and we cannot but be thankful to him who will furniſh us with a ſimple medicine, which may recover theſe miſerable ſufferers, without expoſing them to a violent operation. *Such* a remedy we now can boaſt of; and its efficacy has been happily experienced by thouſands in the courſe of a few years. From the verge of death they have been reſtored to life and health, and from being a burthen to themſelves and the public, they have been rendered uſeful and valuable members of ſociety. And ſuch has been the effect of theſe remedies on ſome of the patients, that though before unwilling to have their ſituation known, they have afterwards readily publiſhed their caſe, as an inſtance of their gratitude to the proprietor,

and

and as a means of pointing out a cure to thoſe who ſtand in need of it.

Thus we might go through the whole catalogue of advertiſed medicines, and ſearch into the reaſons for their publication, and the various teſtimonies of their virtues. I am induced to think we ſhould find few of them unworthy the commendations which are given them, by their reſpective proprietors; and that inſtead of meriting the cenſures which have of late been thrown upon them, they deſerve our hearty encouragement.

But there are ſome, notwithſtanding, who would perſuade us that this is not the caſe, and that the wonderful accounts of cures which we ſo frequently read, do not deſerve belief, being, as they obſerve, either abſolute forgeries, or ſuch as have been obtained from the patients by a well-timed gratuity; which is ſaying, in other words, that nearly one half of the kingdom has been bribed or duped, to ſerve a few individuals. In anſwer to this plea, I ſhall juſt take the liberty of referring them to the proprietor of any advertiſed medicine, who will, I doubt not, produce the original letters of his patients, and many of them,

them, too, of very reſpectable character, whoſe rank and fortune place them far above an act of meanneſs, and who have publiſhed their cures from a principle of humanity, and with a view of doing juſtice to the author and his medicine. And ſuch as have not theſe advantages, and might, from their ſituation in life, be ſuppoſed, by malicious perſons, to be capable of being overcome by pecuniary conſiderations, have their cures properly authenticated by the teſtimony of their neighbouring friends, who were acquainted with the nature of their diſorder, and ſaw the effects of the medicine in its ſeveral ſtages.—The place of their reſidence is not concealed, and the advertiſements of their cures are circulated in their own neighbourhood, ſo that if there was any deſign of impoſition in the caſe, it would undoubtedly be diſcovered immediately, and there are ſufficient reaſons for our believing that ſuch a diſcovery would not long remain in private hands. There are enemies enough to their ſucceſs, who would take pains to publiſh the deceit, and expoſe the author to the utmoſt of their power. Yet, amongſt the many advertiſements of remarkable cures, we have not heard of one inſtance, where a fraud was intended by the proprietor, or the patient; which is a conſideration that muſt ſurely have a very

ſtriking

ſtriking effect upon all reaſonable and diſintereſted perſons.

In the whole, then, we find, that theſe medicines do not deſerve the calumny which is ſo generally thrown upon them. A long experience has proved their efficacy; and that they are both *eaſy*, *ſafe*, and *valuable* aſſiſtants when illneſs comes upon us; and that they are alſo the *cheapeſt*, cannot by any means be denied. When *theſe* are uſed, the phyſician's advice, and the apothecary's attendance are equally unneceſſary. The phyſic is adapted to the age and conſtitution of the patient, who, by leſſening or increaſing the common doſe, according to the printed directions given him, may at once become his own phyſician, and may preſcribe and adminiſter for his own diſorder, in leſs time, and at leſs expence than he can be ſerved by an apothecary. He has no one, in this caſe, to trifle with his conſtitution, for the ſake of lengthening out a bill of expences; but has the nature and operation of the medicine ſo plainly laid down to him, that he cannot err, and if his diſeaſe is within the reach of medicine, he has nothing to fear.

Having

Having theſe facts and theſe arguments on our ſide, aſſiſted by the teſtimony of that multitude who are yet alive by means of public medicines, what can we conclude, but that the objectors to them are led away by prejudice and partiality? It would be the height of madneſs, therefore, to follow *their* opinions, when common ſenſe and reaſon point out to us a contrary way of thinking.—Facts will ever ſpeak for themſelves; and from the repeated inſtances which we have of the efficacy of advertiſed medicines, there can be little ſaid in favour of thoſe who reject them becauſe they are advertiſed, or employ an apothecary becauſe he perſuades them to it.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE the author ſent the foregoing ſheets to preſs, he accidentally met with a volume of poems, wherein, amongſt other humorous articles, is the following picture of a modern phyſician, which he has taken the liberty of extracting for the amuſement of his readers.

At the opening of the poem, the Phyſician is repreſented as in converſation with the vicar of his pariſh, who ſeems deſirous of making his ſon a doctor, and lays down a plan of education for that purpoſe, proceeding gradually from the grammar ſchool, through the many ſtudies of Latin, French and Greek, and thence to the univerſities of this and other countries; after which his ſtudies are to be completed by attending lectures, hoſpitals, &c. &c.

The Phyſician here interrupts him thus:

——— Hold! hold! my friend,
Tom of his ſtudies ne'er will ſee an end!
Why, at the rate you mean to go about,
Two thouſand pounds will hardly bear you out:

But

But ceaſe this rant,—I'll put you in a way,
A hundred ſhall the whole expence defray.

I am retir'd from buſineſs, therefore ſafe,
And how I've humm'd the world, I now may laugh:
I know nor Greek nor Latin; and have read
Ev'n Engliſh authors very few indeed!
'Tis not by learning we Phyſicians riſe,
By other arts we catch the people's eyes;
The force of mere abilities is ſmall,
'Tis front, appearance, and addreſs is all:
Some, who for learning bore ſuch high repute,
Starve in obſcurity, and walk on foot;
But he who has a front, addreſs, and wig,
Rides in his coach, his fame and fortune big.

Men in all arts with ſome things cheat our eyes,
And every trade has got its myſteries;
Ours too is cloath'd with like myſterious air,
(For ev'n the trade of phyſic cheats its ſhare.)
Thus I am call'd for inſtance to a caſe;
I go in all the forms of dreſs and face;
Enquire the ſymptoms,—patients pulſe I feel,
"You underſtand the caſe"—"Extremely well."
For if but in the leaſt you ſeem to doubt,
"The Doctor knows not what he is about;"
With pen and ink my ready hand I arm,
And order what will do nor good nor harm;

If

If nature can her part ſucceſsful play,
'Tis I with all the honour run away;
But if the ſick grows worſe and worſe, or dies,
A thouſand reaſons inſtantly will riſe,—
Caught cold—the fault at nurſe's threſhold lies!
I paint a patient bad as ere I can,
" The caſe is deſp'rate—he's a dying man."—
Then if he dies—" Why he's a prophet ſure!"
But if he lives—" God bleſs me!—what a cure!"

The friends, perhaps, are anxious to be told
What's his diſorder—that I can't unfold;
Yet put 'em off with ſome hard myſtic name,
It goes down!—right or wrong, 'tis all the ſame.

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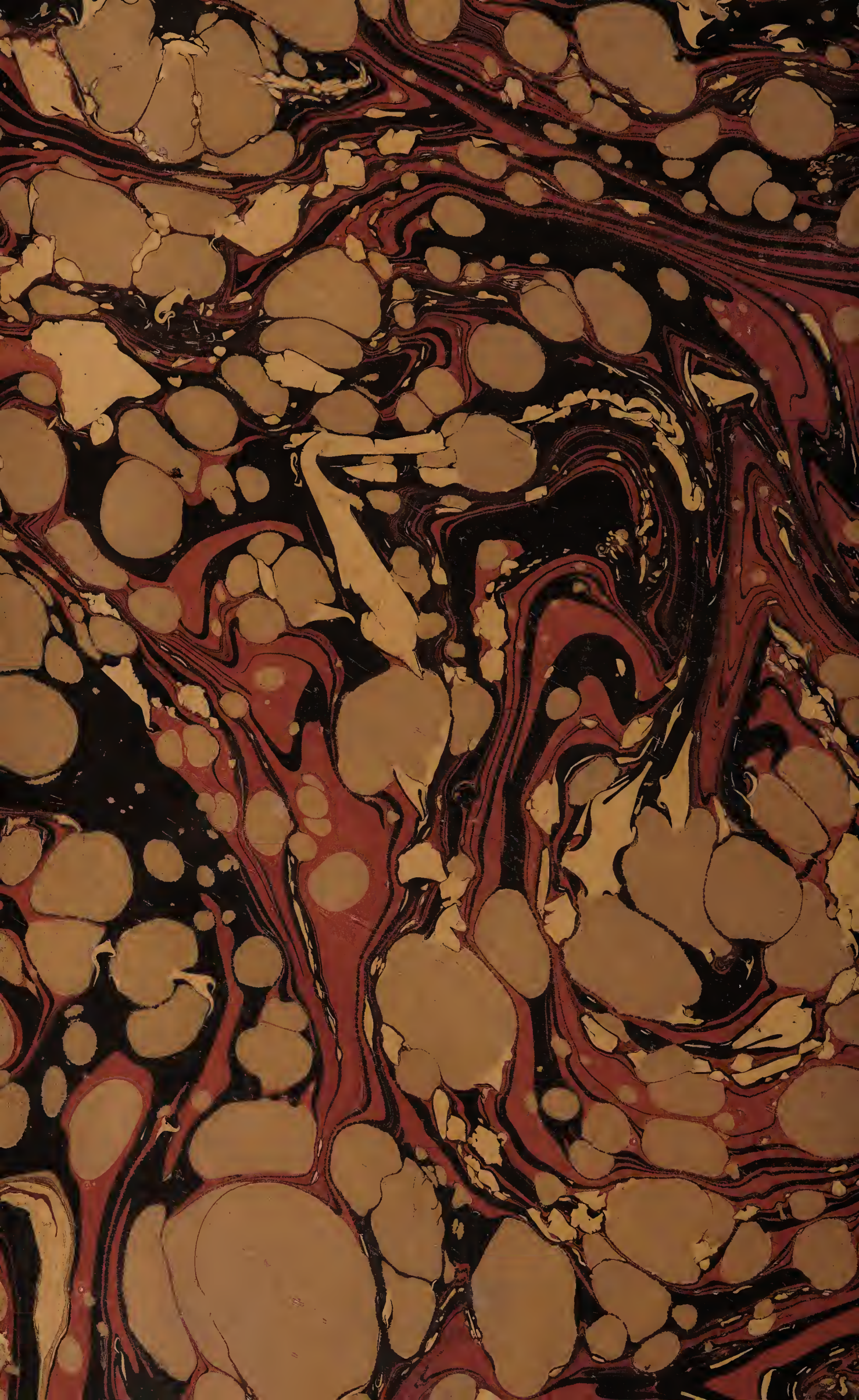
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